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NOTE FOR: The Acting Director
FROM: Dave Gries
SUBJECT: Joint Intelligence Committee

STAT

As you know Hyde in the House and Quayle in the Senate are pushing bills that would create a joint Intelligence Committee. The Administration has never taken an official position on either bill.

The attached letter from the Vice President to Hyde endorsing Hyde's proposal comes as a surprise. We called OMB this afternoon and learned that the letter had not been cleared, nor discussed with them. However, they did feel that it would be perceived on the Hill as an expression of Administration policy.

Incidentally, when Hyde was here last week for breakfast, he explained that he envisioned a joint committee that would have full authorizing powers. That is much more attractive than a clone of the Joint Atomic Energy Commission, whose bills were authorized elsewhere in the Congress.

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D/OCA:DDG:mlg (15 August 1986)



THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

June 18, 1986

The Honorable Henry J. Hyde
2104 Rayburn
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Henry:

This is to reaffirm my support for your proposal to establish a Joint Intelligence Committee (H.J. Res. 7).

As you know, our recently concluded Task Force on Combatting Terrorism, which included the Secretaries of State and Defense, the Attorney General, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Director of the FBI, and the Director of Central Intelligence, found that timely and accurate intelligence is essential if we are to prevail against terrorism. We devoted considerable effort to evaluating necessary improvements in our overall intelligence capability.

Much of what we ultimately recommended pertains to the Executive Branch and implementation efforts are now under way. As Secretary of State Shultz has noted, among the anti-terrorist options that must be made available to the President are those involving covert activities which, to be successful, must be planned and conducted in a leak-proof environment. As we have painfully learned in recent months, keeping a secret in this government is becoming increasingly difficult. Consequently, we in the Executive Branch are now significantly reducing the number of individuals with access to sensitive information, as well as disciplining those who have leaked classified material.

But fighting terrorism is not exclusively a concern of the Executive Branch, nor is it a partisan issue. Our Task Force noted with pride the long history of close

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cooperation between Congress and the Executive Branch in eliminating statutory loopholes that had hindered our ability to prosecute terrorists. It is with this spirit of cooperation in mind that the Task Force endorsed your proposal to create a Joint Committee on Intelligence. That proposal, H.J. Res. 7, would streamline procedures for Congressional intelligence oversight, reduce the number of people privy to secrets on a routine basis, and provide a much needed single, secure repository for classified data.

I understand that H.J. Res. 7 already has 159 bipartisan cosponsors and the list is growing rapidly. I strongly urge all members who have not already done so to join our effort to combat terrorism by supporting this measure.

Sincerely,

orig. signed by GHB
George Bush